

A riparian landowner owns property adjacent to a lake or stream. The shoreline of a lake or stream and the immediate adjacent area is called a **riparian buffer**. Riparian landowners are the last defense to protect our lakes and streams.

What is a Watershed?
Area of land and water draining to a particular river, stream, lake or wetland.

Healthy riparian buffers serve many purposes such as protecting water quality, reducing erosion, enhancing wildlife habitat, minimizing impacts of human activities, and providing positive aesthetics.



Riparian landowners enjoy benefits from the lake or stream's natural attributes and are responsible for maintaining the streambanks or lakeshore (and riparian buffer) on your property.

This brochure provides some helpful tips for maintaining a healthy riparian buffer. Riparian buffers should be at least 10 feet of dense native plants to grow along the water's edge and streambank to allow pollutants to filter out and the banks to stabilize.

Resources

STREAM/SHORELINE BEST MNGT. PRACTICES

- ◆ Before making any stream or shoreline modifications please contact:
 - ◆ Lake Co. Stormwater Management Commission, 500 W. Winchester, Suite 201, Libertyville, IL 60048, (847) 377-7700, www.lakecountyil.gov/stormwater

PLANT/TREE INFORMATION

- ◆ Illinois Native Plant Guide, download from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS): www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/il/plantsanimals/
- ◆ Native Tree/Shrub Information at Conserve Lake County website: <http://www.conservelakecounty.org/images/pdf/native-trees-and-shrubs-lake-county-illinois.pdf>
- ◆ Tree and plant descriptions—Morton Arboretum: <http://www.mortonarb.org/trees-plants/tree-plant-descriptions>
- ◆ Purchasing Native Plants—IL Native Plant Society—www.ill-inps.org/
- ◆ Midwest Invasive Plant Network—Invasive Species Alternatives : <http://www.mipn.org/publications>

SHORELINE MNGT., POLLUTANTS, & WATER QUALITY

- ◆ Lake Co. Health Department, Lakes Management Unit (LCHD), 500 W. Winchester Rd. Libertyville, IL 60048, (847) 377-8000, <http://health.lakecountyil.gov/Population/Pages/Lakes-Management.aspx>

SOIL TESTING

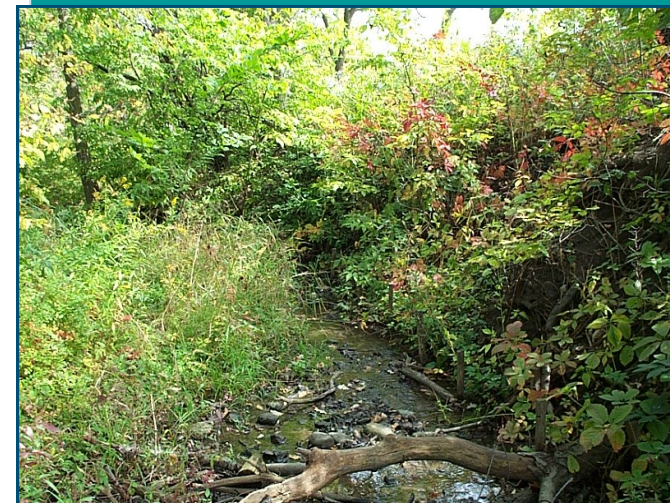
- ◆ University of Illinois Extension—Grayslake, IL <http://extension.illinois.edu/soiltest/>

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LIVING ON THE WATER'S EDGE



Living on the water's edge refers to landowners that live at properties along the shoreline of a lake or stream and the immediate adjacent area; this is also referred to as **RIPARIAN BUFFER**.



Best Management Practices for Properties Adjacent to Streams and Lakes

DON'T DUMP!

Dumping yard waste and other debris in your riparian buffers and streams can cause stream blockages, elevate flood stages, and wash sediment and debris (excessive nutrients) into the water bodies.



- ◆ Never dispose of chemicals in the streams, lakes or riparian buffers.
- ◆ Never dispose of branches, leaves, or clippings in the riparian buffers.
- ◆ Remove fallen trees that block flows

FERTILIZE WISELY

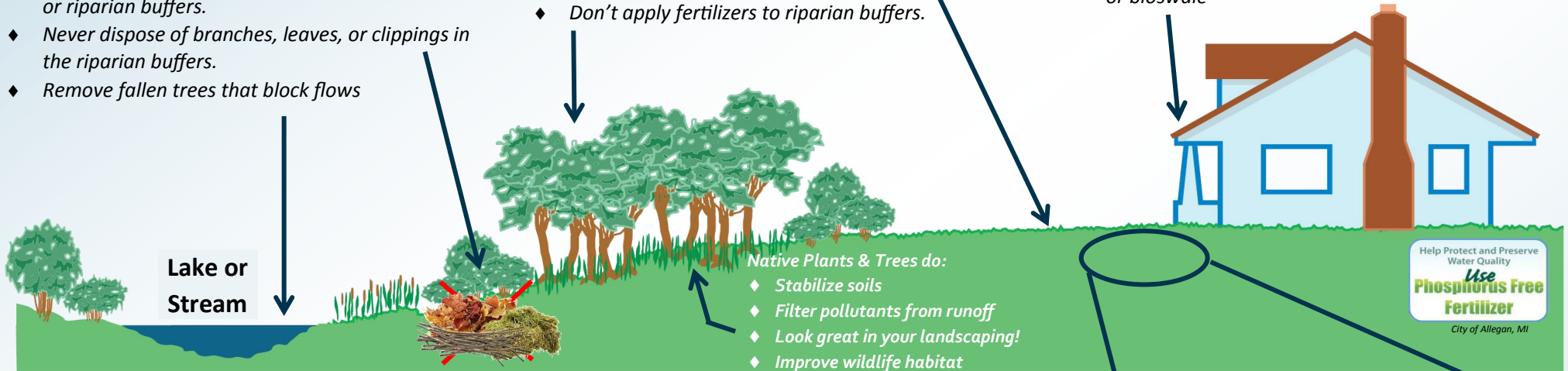
One of the **largest** problems in Lake County streams and lakes is high amount of nutrients, which produce excessive growth of algae and other undesirable aquatic plants.

- ◆ Test your soil before fertilizing.
- ◆ Don't apply fertilizer before a rain event
- ◆ Be P-free with your fertilizers!
- ◆ Don't apply fertilizers to riparian buffers.

MINIMIZE STORMWATER RUNOFF

Impervious surfaces (roofs and driveways) convey runoff and pollution to our waterways. By minimizing impervious surfaces you can reduce the transport of sediment, chemicals, and other pollutants to waters.

- ◆ Disconnect flow from downspouts & sump pumps from the stream or lake and direct to a rain garden or bioswale



RIPARIAN BUFFER



RIGHT PLANT—RIGHT PLACE!

Deep rooted native plants and trees have long root systems to keep soils in place, absorb runoff, and filter out pollutants. When ground and banks are left bare, soil erodes and washes off into nearby lakes and streams.

- ◆ Remove invasive plants from your yard & riparian buffers
- ◆ Use deep rooted native plants in your landscaping—less water required



Rain Gardens are shallow depressions planted with native plants and are positioned to capture stormwater runoff.

REFERENCES

- Riparian Area Management A Citizen's Guide. Lake County Stormwater Management Commission, (LCSMC.) Libertyville, Illinois, 2014.
- Managing the Water's Edge, Making Natural Connections: Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Waukesha, Wisconsin, 2010.